

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 4

By Henry

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Mr. Robert C.H. Mathews, Jr. of Nashville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Mr. Robert C. H. "Bob" Mathews, Jr., of Nashville; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Mathews was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, instrumental in the development and growth of Nashville into the vibrant metropolitan city it is today, Robert C. H. "Bob" Mathews, Jr., was a distinguished civic leader, visionary developer, and esteemed businessman; and

WHEREAS, chairman of The Mathews Company development firm and associated companies including, R.C. Mathews Contractor and NAI Nashville, Mr. Mathews held leadership positions within the company for nearly sixty years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Mathews was one of the city's most active builders, leaving behind a string of landmarks that he either built or developed, including the L & C Tower, then the tallest building in the Southeast, the Belle Meade Tower, MetroCenter, One Nashville Place, Commerce Center, and the Commerce Street Parking Garage; and

WHEREAS, he played the key role in the revitalization of downtown Nashville in the 1980s and 1990s; his contracting company built or renovated such local treasures as the Frist Center for the Visual Arts, the Ryman Auditorium, the Hermitage Hotel, the Stahlman Building, and Ensworth School; and

WHEREAS, born in Pennsylvania and moving to Nashville as a child, Robert C. H. "Bob" Mathews, Jr., attended Montgomery Bell Academy, where he was a member of the football team's famed Four Horsemen; and

WHEREAS, a member of this Nation's greatest generation, Mr. Mathews proudly served in the United States Army during World War II as a member of the Army Signal Corps; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Mathews was a 1951 graduate of Vanderbilt University Engineering School where he was a member of and President of Phi Delta Theta fraternity and founder of the engineering magazine the *V square*; after graduation he joined his father in business at R.C. Mathews Contractor; and

WHEREAS, utilizing his tremendous talents as an engineer, Mr. Mathews's innovative techniques in the 1960s transformed the swampy site of Bush Bottom into the MetroCenter development that today is home to dozens of businesses, including the Tennessee Titans of the National Football League; and

WHEREAS, a truly visionary developer, in the early 1980s Bob Mathews focused his efforts on revitalizing the blighted downtown area on Second Avenue and Lower Broadway; purchasing whole buildings, his renovations took great pains to preserve the historic structures while establishing successful businesses; and

WHEREAS, the signature piece of Mr. Mathews' downtown Nashville development efforts for many is the renovation of the legendary Ryman Auditorium. Stretching from Fifth to Second Avenue, the development project led South Central Bell to consider Nashville for its new headquarters; and

WHEREAS, a valued member of numerous local, regional, and national civic boards, Bob Mathews was a longtime member and former president of the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, past chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, Nashville Branch, and the Central Business Improvement District; and

WHEREAS, understanding the economic importance of air transportations, Mr. Mathews served as a board member of the Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority for twenty-two years, including nine as chairman, during which time he led the effort to attract the American Airlines hub, expand air service by Southwest Airlines, and secure a nonstop flight to London, England; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, in 1987 he was named Salesperson of the Year by the Sales and Marketing Executive of Nashville, received the Businessperson of the Year award in 1988, and, in 1999, was given the inaugural National Association of Industrial

and Office Properties (NAIOP) Legacy Award as the outstanding Middle Tennessee developer; and

WHEREAS, honored in 2006 as the recipient of the first Vision Award from the Downtown Partnership, Mr. Mathews received the Nashville Land Conservation Award and a lifetime achievement award from the Excellence in Development Group in 2004; and

WHEREAS, in October 2008, Mr. Mathews was posthumously awarded the Chamber of Commerce's Spirit of the Region Award, having exemplified in his lifetime of achievement, the Chamber's brand elements to *belong, engage, lead, and prosper*; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Mathews was a member of the Urban Land Institute, the Society of Cincinnati, the Society for International Business Fellows, the Land Trust of Tennessee, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Rotary Club of Nashville, and the YMCA Foundation; and

WHEREAS, a lifetime member and past president of the Ensworth School Board of Trustees, Mr. Mathews served as chairman of the Advisory Council of the Cumberland Valley Girl Scouts, was a past president of Cheekwood Botanical Gardens and Fine Arts Center, Leadership Nashville, and the Cumberland Science Museum, now known as the Adventure Science Center; and

WHEREAS, Bob Mathews was an active and devout member of West End United Methodist Church, which he served faithfully for many years in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Mathews was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, he is survived by his devoted wife, Alice Casey Mathews, and their three children and their spouses, Robert Cabeen Hopkins Mathews III and wife Brooks, Walker Casey Mathews and wife Renee, and Mary Alice Mathews Bohannon and husband Lindsay; and

WHEREAS, preceded in death by his parents, Robert Cabeen Hopkins Mathews, Sr., and Mary Olive Mathews, Mr. Mathews is also survived by his sister, Mary Lee Manier, and eleven grandchildren: Alice Mathews Bohannon, Evelyn Elizabeth Banks Bohannon, Philip Lindsay Bohannon, Jr., Walker Casey Mathews, Jr., Christopher Newport Mathews, Emma Felcite Mathews, William Harding Blackman, Alex Baines Harlin Blackman, Walter Hughes Blackman, Ella Dedman Mathews, and Robert Cabeen Hopkins Mathews IV; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Mathews leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Robert C.H. "Bob" Mathews, Jr., reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Robert C.H. Mathews, Jr.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.